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"Only a universal standard of immutable truth can unite society, enlighten the world, establish real peace, brotherhood and fellowship, and put an end to all religious ignorance, superstition, jargon, and discord."—PARLEY P. PRATT.

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JOSEPH SMITH AND THE BOOK OF MORMON

DR. HERBERT Z. LUND

. . . .

"MORMONISM" had its inception in a blaze of spiritual glory—visions, angelic visitations, golden bible, prophecy, and the holy gifts of the Spirit. To the first question usually put to a "Mormon": "Do you believe in these things?" I wish to answer: "I most assuredly do!"

Religion had its birth in these spiritual conceptions. To me it is the poetry, the beauty, the vitality of religion. The Jewish Record is one round of these divine expressions. If you wish to emasculate the Holy Bible, remove these things. What would it be without the men who spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost, without the glory of Sinai, without Emmanuel born of the Virgin, or without the revelation of Deity Himself?

I believe in a personal Deity, one that can reveal Himself or make personal contact with His children. I am persuaded that humanity unconsciously clings to this conception. Certain of my friends say it isn't big enough, that it is unphilosophical. Disraeli asks: "Is it more unphilosophical to believe in a personal God omnipotent, omniscient, than in natural forces unconscious and irresistible. Is it unphilosophical to combine power with intelligence"? Is it more philosophical to believe in the monad of pure intelligence in the center of space (the thought of Goethe and Spinoza) than the truth first revealed to man that God created man in His own image?

There is no relation between the faculties of man and the scale of creation of the planet which he inhabits. The earth is a molehill by a mountain compared to the sun. The mind of man penetrates beyond the sun off into the depths a hundred and fifty million light years away. He analyzes the stars, has made serious efforts in weighing the universe. We meet in religious services to contemplate the things of God, past, present and future; and in such contemplation our souls may mount up to adoration, up to that majestic attitude of worship. This is the

supreme expression of vital activity! There is nothing outside so big, so subtle, so marvellous. So when I ascribe personality to Deity, I do not detract from His omnipotence, omniscience, or majesty. Such a God can and does reveal Himself.

I believe that if the Spirit of Truth or the Holy Ghost is enjoyed by any religious organization, prophecy, vision and miracle cannot be denied. Paul, in his description of the body of the Church, likens it unto the human body, and says:

> But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; To another prophecy: . . . For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. . . . And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee. . . . all are necessary. (1 Cor. 12: 7-22.)

The human body is the most perfect machine or construction known. Every part is essential—the comely and the uncomely. Every part has its function.

ALL ARE NECESSARY TO THE PERFECT WHOLE

Years ago the pituitary gland was thought to be a vestigial body, a remnant, a third eye. It was removed by a surgeon in a young ape, and it was found that this ape grew out of all proportion. He discovered that it regulated the growth of bones and had other wonderful influence on the metabolism of the body. Every portion and part is essential as Paul says, and the eye cannot say unto the hand, "I have no need of thee"; nor again, the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." Are all prophets, apostles, or workers of miracles? But all are essential to the perfect whole. The gifts of the Spirit are absolutely essential for the growth and well-being of the Body of Christ. Deny prophecy or vision and you put out the eyes. Who has a right to place inhibitions on the gifts of the Spirit of Truth? Some of our religious friends may suggest that they are in the more excellent way suggested by Paul, "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." Who is so perfect that he does not look through a glass darkly? Or see only in part? If so, prophecy and the gifts of the Spirit of Truth are necessary, and come absolutely within the philosophy of St. Paul. Any other view does not. Moroni, one of the prophets, says, "And now I speak unto the ends of the earth that if the day cometh that the power and gifts of God shall be done away, it shall be because of unbelief."

No one has a right to say these gifts of the Spirit are vestigial!

But one may ask, "How can the Holy Ghost illumine the mind of man and bring forth that miracle of knowledge, 'prophecy'"? I do not know. How can the green colouring matter of the leaf transform the sunbeam into tissue? How is the energy of the clod transformed into the activity of subtle consciousness? I do not know. I do not know how the Holy Ghost operates on the minds of men, but it does. Instance: The prophecy of Isaiah against the mighty Babylon:

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

Just as remarkable a prophecy was made against Tyre and Sidon, and the mighty mistress of the sea has dwindled practically to nothing. Joseph Smith predicted that the saints would suffer hardships; and many, death; and would finally be driven to the Rocky Mountains and there become a great and mighty people, all of which has been veritably fulfilled. Our friends say, "Of course, theologically you are on secure ground, but scientifically what about it"? I am sorry science has no conclusions on the subject. Let us hope that some day the handmaid of truth will remove her sandals and tread this holy ground.

THE APPEAL OF THE PROPHET'S CLAIMS

Joseph Smith claims that an angel fresh from the bosom of God came and delivered to him a sacred record of generations of men who lived on the American continent, and that by the power of God he was enabled to translate it. To many this seems unthinkable, an absurdity of the first magnitude. To him who has flippantly read a chapter here and there and stumbled over "And it came to pass," it seems a jumble.

And as one said, "By the time he came to the Book of Ether, he was anaesthetized." Yes, we have all heard these "wise-cracks." But to the thoughtful reader the authorship of the Book of Mormon has always been a puzzle. The thoughtful investigator without exception has invaribly come to the conclusion that Joseph Smith could not have written it, and he has set out diligently to find the author, but he has never been found. He was not Sidney Rigdon, he was not Parley Pratt, nor Solomon Spalding. No one man could write the Book of Mormon. No one man can write a Bible. That is a product of nations and peoples—taking the Holy Bible as a standard.

This "Mormon" prophet, with his visions, angel visitations, prophecy, has been variously explained on psyschological (the science of the nature of the human soul and mind) and pathological (the science of disease) grounds. Some have striven hard to put him under certain types of psychosis or mental derangement. Dr. Riley says:

> There is no call for so harsh a judgment; the visionary seizures were not consequent on dementia nor were they feigned. There is a truer and at the same time a more charitable explanation. It is, in a word, that Joseph Smith, Jr., was an epileptic. Steeped in ignorance and superstition, it was not to be expected that the parents could diagnose the case. Such seizures could be so slight that even bystanders do not notice them.

In this case I am sure of it. And I may add that some would-be bright psychiatrist has not been able to see them either.

In the matter of heredity, he points to nervous antecendents. What family hasn't them? He says there was a case of trau-

matic or violent epilepsy. It is very doubtful if this type can be transmitted. At no one seizure do all the classical symptoms of Grand Mal appear. At one time a dislocated thumb, at another a bruised side, at another exhaustion in the field, at another a loss of speech, because he did not answer his mother immediately, etc., and after amassing all these symptoms he attaches them on the most indefinite form of this dreadful disease, the transitional epilepsy.

"Transitory conditions of depression, excitement, confusion, delirium, and stupor may develop; and, quite characteristically, a condition of ecstasy with hallucinations. The patient sees the gates of heaven open, and as the heavenly hosts appear he hears himself addressed by the voice of God." After such psychic experience the patient is hazy or a blank as to what happened. The delusions are not systematized. Reason, purposeful concentration and consciousness, have for the time being toppled, What can come out of that? Upon the arch spanning from Petit Mal to Grand Mal, or from slight psychic disturbance to a terrible convulsive seizure may be written faints, absences, blank, amnesia, in a word, vacuity. What can come of so sterile a field? Surely not a fruitful vision nor a Golden Bible!

SYMPTOMS THAT WERE NOT PRESENT

With a seizure comes a mental splash and forgetfulness, memory is abolished, for the time being the patient does not recall what happened. Yet here is Joseph Smith relating how an angel of light came to him and quoted the third chapter of Malachi, the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, the third chapter of Acts, explains the second chapter of Joel from the twenty-eighth verse on, and many more passages of scripture. Can you explain that in technical terms of opthalmic migraine, hallucinary progression, dementia or Grand Mal?

He claims further that the spontaneous cure came at the age of twenty-one. Yet, after this we find him and Oliver Cowdery on the banks of the Susquehanna river, and to them appeared John the Baptist and delivered the Aaronic Priesthood. This interpreted into the pathology of Dr. Riley would mean that the two men had a simultaneous seizure. Very cozy pathology indeed!

He further adds: "To one who has waded through this sea of swash (the Book of Mormon) there will occur the words of Dr. Johnson concerning young Chatterton: 'This is the most extraordinary young man that has encountered my knowledge. It is wonderful how the whelp has written such things." Yes, and when one, understanding the scientific grounds upon which Riley bases his conclusion, has waded through his book of swash, he is reminded of how the mountain has laboured and brought forth a mouse." The whole argument is academic rather than applicable. What constructive thing can come out of a seizure or vanity, or semi-worshipful attitude these patients assume at times? Nothing! Joseph Smith never was so afflicted.

He has been explained on the grounds of paranoia, or mental derangement. No term in psychiatry has undergone wider variations of meaning. It used to mean just craziness, but now it means one afflicted with systematized delusions. One so afflicted is in a constant morbid introspection about things he desires to

understand. He finds people leagued against him, and therefore concludes he is a personage of some importance.

He has auditory hallucinations—hears things—and is afflicted with delusions of persecution. The delusional system may become extremely complex in all directions. involving all kinds of occurrences and experiences. The Prophet Joseph is explained by this type of psychosis, and "Mormonism" as just a fabric of systematized delusions of this pathological mind.

When we were studying this subject in our medical school, I went into the great library at Washington to read what literature I could on this mental disease. I picked up Dr. Dana's work on nervous diseases and there to my surprise I found a discussion (a favourable one) on the Prophet Joseph Smith. Incidentally it brought forcibly to my mind the prophetic statement that his name should be had for good or for evil the world over. Dr. Dana said :

> A mind of this type is a sick mind. He may attract weak minds and even discerning minds about him. He may hold them for some time, but sooner or later some one will detect the delusional structure and destroy it. Joseph Smith, the "Mormon" Prophet, cannot be explained on this type of psychosis. He attracted strong minds, built a commonwealth, established a church that has devotees by the hundreds of thousands.

THE PROPHET ATTRACTED THE STRONGEST MINDS

No, those who must explain the "Mormon" Prophet must do it on some other grounds. Joseph Smith did attract some of the strongest minds of his time. There were the Pratts, H. C. Kimball, John Taylor, the Snows, Orson Hyde, Wilford Woodruff, the Smiths, Daniel H. Wells, and this type of excellent manhood might be indefinitely extended. Brigham Young, as an executive, a leader, and an empire builder can be compared to the great of all time. The organization of the "Mormon" Church has been compared to the best organizations extant.

His philosophy of life is the best I know. We lived before Jehovah planted the heavens or laid the foundation of the earth. Through the redemption we live after death. A fullness of joy is obtained by the inseparable union of spirit and element. Through the great principle of eternal progression we go on and on to perfection. A volume of scripture has been added to the world's sacred literature. Is all this a product of a diseased mind? With the great doctor, you will have to find a better basis for explaining the "Mormon" Prophet.

When I think of Missouri, I almost wish his persecutions had been delusional! He had no hallucinations, no delusions. To me he will ever be one hundred per cent. prophet.

The witnesses of the Book of Mormon have been variously explained. One of the Prophets of the Book of Mormon said, "Wherefore by the words of three God hath said, 'I will establish my word. Nevertheless God sendeth more witnesses and he provest all his words.'" Witnesses not only establish a fact, but form the surest protection against collusion and fraud. It has been explained that Joseph Smith was a very strong character, a man of great personal magnetism. He took these witnesses into the woods and so dominated them with his suggestions and views that they were able to see through his eyes.

They were forced to cast their subjective activity on the external screen and there watch the panorama unfold. They claim that these witnesses were drilled in the vision-expectancy and therefore good subjects. A certain plausibility might attach to this argument. We have all seen the hypnotist double the personality of his patient, cause him to sleep, or drive him into absurd antics; but he always avoids in his operations the refractory or stubborn subject.

It is hard for me to imagine three subjects more difficult to deceive than Martin Harris, David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery. Martin Harris was a plain, sober business man and farmer. His perversity and incredulity are instanced in the losing of the 116 pages of manuscript. David Whitmer was a strong, determined, self-willed man; had a fine intellect; a man who was not bobbled about by every wave of doctrine. Nothing of the neurotic about him! He was a man not to be dominated by anyone. Oliver Cowdery was possibly more impressionable than the other two witnesses.

OLIVER COWDERY'S POWERS OF REASON

He had splendid powers of reasoning, and reason is the sieve which stops unhealthy suggestions and allows only those to pass which lead in normal ways. None of these was a neurasthenic or neurotic. They were not incredibly credulous. They were refractory subjects. This is their testimony:

> Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken. And we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true. And it is marvelous in our eyes. Nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honour be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.
>
> OLIVER COWDERY
> DAVID WHITMER
> MARTIN HARRIS

That is the testimony of these witnesses. They all departed into the fog of apostasy; all three of them became personally estranged from the Prophet. Oliver Cowdery, who had shared in these magnificent visions of the Prophet, never did deny his testimony; and in after years he came back to the Church when it was in distress, asking not for position or place, but just to be

a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He made the significant statement that he wrote nearly every word of the Book of Mormon as it fell from the lips of the Prophet Joseph, and that neither Solomon Spalding nor Sidney Rigdon, nor any other man, wrote that book. He was true to his testimony. He had a chance to get away from this hypnotic rub of the Prophet when he was in Michigan practising law.

Martin Harris also left the Church, but never did deny his testimony that he had seen these plates and the angel, and had heard that wonderful divine testimony. He came back and he died with the saints, and he was never happier than when testifying of this grand vision and of the truthfulness of the record.

DAVID WHITMER'S DYING TESTIMONY

David Whitmer, after years and years, gave the same wonderful testimony. This strong-minded man, this determined man, never did return to the fold, but declared all the time that the Nephite record was true. He had plenty of time to have gotten away from that personal touch of the Prophet, or to have departed from that psychic pathology. The last testimony he gave was in his own name. He called the doctor, I think, a relative, and asked him if he, Whitmer, was in his sane mind. The doctor said, "You are."

"The Nephite record is true."

No pathology about that testimony! It cannot be explained by hypnotism nor by the various psychic explanations that we have had. These men claimed that they saw an angel, heard the testimony from out the deep that these things were true. They stuck to that testimony throughout their lives! That testimony stands unimpeached and unimpeachable! No man can say they lied. No man can say they did not see what they said they saw, and hear what they said they heard. God has established His word by witnesses.

The Book of Mormon has come forth as a sacred volume of scripture. It is a wonderful book. It was predicted that it would come forth in the latter days, and it has gone to nearly every nation, kindred, tongue and people. It has been translated into all the major languages of the earth. If you go to South Africa or to the sod huts of Lapland you will find the Book of Mormon. The Elders have always said that if they could sell a Book of Mormon they would win a convert.

It is a volume of prophecy, a volume of sacred literature, a volume of clarity, one that delves into the depths of religious doctrine. I have never studied a volume of scripture that has appealed to me so forcibly. I recommend it to you all. Read it, and the more you read it, the more you will love it, and the more you will see in it. It is a marvellous work and a wonder. It is a volume that has "sprung out of the ground, and has whispered low out of the dust." It is deserving of our most careful attention.

May God bless you and help you to see and to know the truth, I ask, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.—(Address delivered in the Tabernacle at Salt Lake City, Utah, September 24th, 1933.)

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1933

EDITORIAL

THEY ARE LEAVING US

THEY are leaving us, that is, President and Sister Widtsoe and their daughter, Eudora, are taking passage for America on October 28th. Hosts of friends and saints in the British Isles and on the Continent will wish them *bon voyage*, but at the same time will sorrow at their going. During their residence here of nearly six years the Widtsoes have endeared themselves to thousands. These hosts have recognized in them real friends,

LEAH D. WIDTSOE DR. JOHN A. WIDTSOE EUDORA WIDTSOE

broad-minded, tolerant people, possessed of deep human sympathies and a genuine love for the saints in this part of the world.

President Widtsoe is a Norwegian by birth. He accepted the Gospel and was baptized in Norway. Though he emigrated to Utah in his early boyhood, he later returned to Europe, accompanied by his wife, for travel and study, most of the time being spent in Germany, where he earned and received a doctor's degree from the University of Göttingen in 1899. In 1922 Brother Widtsoe again returned to Europe to study conditions, accompanying on this trip United States Senator Reed Smoot, a member of the Council of Twelve Apostles. Thus President Widtsoe is not only a European by birth, but, in part, by education as

well. Do these facts explain the quality of his deep love for the people who live here?

President Widtsoe has unusual energy and capabilities, combined with a passionate love of service. These qualities have been ceaselessly exercised during his presidency of the European Mission of the Church. Trained by many years of experience in creative and executive work before coming here as president, he was eminently qualified to carry on and further develop the work of the office which President James E. Talmage turned over to him at the beginning of 1928.

For some time, like his predecessors, he had a double responsibility, the presidency of the British as well as that of the European Mission. From one point of view this was fortunate, for it brought him into intimate contact with the work of the British Mission, giving him an excellent knowledge of details that otherwise would have been difficult to acquire, knowledge applied in the policies he developed for all the missions.

Perhaps the outstanding feature of these policies is that of stabilizing the branches of the Church, that is, of building them up as permanent units of the Mission according to the pattern of building wards in the stakes in America. This requires a branch presidency, corresponding to the bishopric of a ward, priesthood classes and activities, and the organization of the various auxiliaries—Relief Society, Sunday School, Mutual Improvement Association, Primary, etc. The consummation of this plan would give the members of the branch the activity and personal development opportunities enjoyed by the members of a ward. Of course, this implies that each branch shall, as soon as possible, own its chapel. Shall not all concerned devote themselves ardently to accomplish these things?

Aside from their heavy work as executives, President and Sister Widtsoe devoted much time to writing. Their ready pens will make them long remembered for the books, lessons, tracts, etc., they wrote for the European Missions. And perhaps the saints here may be further favoured by these gifted writers. They undoubtedly envisioned other writings that time did not permit them to complete while here. In any case, their return home will not dampen their devotion to the work of the Lord. They will accomplish with characteristic energy all the work that may be assigned them by the Church authorities who direct their labours.

We know that we voice the sentiments of all readers of the *Star* in wishing them a pleasant and safe return to their home and eminent success in all their future labours. Yes, we shall hear more of them.—M.

A FAREWELL MESSAGE

A FEW days more and we shall be saying good-bye to the Widtsoes, or farewell for a little time only, for we shall have full

hope of seeing them and being with them again when we shall have finished our work here.

They have been wonderful to us, always full of encouragement, ready with splendid counsel and instruction, solicitous of our health, seemingly their first thought for us, and always sympathetic in time of trial.

We have learned to love them very dearly, and we know we shall miss them very much. But they have filled their mission here for the present, and have earned a reward, an honourable release, the climax of a missionary's life.

It would take much space and a long time for us to say all the nice things we would like to say to the Widtsoes and about them, but we shall have time sometime, we hope, to say some of the things we would like to say when we meet again.

May our Heavenly Father bless them, giving them health and strength, and an abundance of all the good things He has in store for His faithful ones.

God bless them and grant them a pleasant and safe journey home.

James H. Douglas
Rintha Pratt Douglas

AS WE PART—WE REMEMBER

On December 23, 1927, three people alighted from the tender of the s.s. *Roosevelt* at Plymouth harbour. The next day they reached Liverpool, Mission headquarters, and began the work to which they had been called. From that day till the present, President John A. Widtsoe, his wife, Leah D. Widtsoe, and daughter Eudora, have worked unceasingly in the Cause of Truth, teaching, advising, building, directing.

Missions have been organized on new, efficient lines. New fields have been opened; old ones have been re-opened and made into fresh vital agencies. Teaching that growth is the law of life, they have made better growth possible to hundreds of workers in the European Missions by shifting responsibility from travelling Elders to the people themselves. Growth through activity! To-day, as a result, a multitude of organizations stands equipped for efficient service where but one stood before. Local leadership is proving itself day by day to be the vitalizing force necessary for expansion in the European mission field. One looks with increasing wonder at the changes wrought in less than a decade.

The past six years have been remarkable for actual work done alone. The missionary experiences of the Widtsoes are no doubt without precedent in Church history. Verily, here is faith and works—but that is not all. The mission of the Widtsoes has to be reckoned by some other medium than that of sheer deeds alone.

Besides organizing mission-wide auxiliaries, besides this herculean effort to stabilize organization through local active par-

ticipation, besides these and a thousand other things that no one but a Mission President can ever know about, in these six years, the Widtsoes have been busily at work manufacturing memories for all of us! Memories that make for character: products of the Mill of Truth. Memories heightened by imagination are what constitute our very beings. Or, in other words, as the Good Book says, "As a man thinketh, so is he."

The conference at Dresden is long since gone; the dedicatory services at the Copenhagen chapel are history; the conversation with the humble men in Palestine has trailed far into the recesses of the past; Saturday nights around the fireside with a group of "Mormon" Elders may be ended forever, but those accumulated experiences of half a dozen years now live in thousands of hearts as truth-memories. Along with the prayers around the dining room table in our own homes, the Sunday School class, the night spent driving stubborn sheep along the dusty road under the stars, the talks with mother as she ironed your shirts while you dangled your legs over the screen porch railing, these truth-memories have now become integral in the composition of human souls. Such memories never die; they grow real with the years. The name Widtsoe will mean far more to succeeding generations than it does to this one, much as it connotes to us of 1933, and much as we would, selfishly, perhaps, say it ever could. Such is the magic of memory!

Because of our proximity to this cherished Mill of Memories, we of the British Mission, over which President and Sister Widtsoe have presided and made their home, feel infinitely more moved when we say our word of farewell than the ordinary phrases would indicate. But so say we, and add our heartfelt wish for a safe journey to the new "field." In days that are now, and days that are to come, our actions, thanks to understandable lessons of truth, may speak above the poverty of mere expression in showing to you our grateful appreciation for your true-blue missionary service. May the lights which you have kindled so unselfishly never grow dim, but grow brighter and brighter "until the perfect day."

The British Missionaries Association knows but one President Widtsoe, but one Sister Widtsoe, and but one Eudora. God be with you till we meet again!—Elder G. Homer Durham.

Have you never read that in the last days all things shall be in commotion? We live in the predicted time of shaking, when every unstable structure shall totter, and only such as are established upon an eternal foundation shall stand. The things of God are not to be shaken even by the boom of man's heaviest artillery; they shall abide in spite of bomb and shell. But the works of human craft shall be shaken—not only so as to material structure, but likewise man's sophistries, erroneous theories, conjectures, philosophy, and such science as is falsely so-called.—Elder James E. Talmage.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Rachel Grant Taylor

[*An interesting page from Sister Rachel Grant Taylor's "Treasures of Truth" that should be an inspiration and an encouragement to Gleaners in their project work. A wealth of such living history of our progenitors, waiting only to be sought out and recorded, surrounds every one of us.*]

I often wondered how a prospector felt when, after years of scouring the hills where he felt there must be gold, he turned up a piece of rich ore. Now I know.

Three years ago I started my Treasures of Truth book, and began collecting material concerning the lives of my four pioneer grand-parents. It was easy to find things written about Grandfather Grant, for he had been Brigham Young's counsellor and the first mayor of Salt Lake City. And I could find a record of my grandmothers, Rachel Ivins and Susan Ashby, but practically nothing about my grandfather, Briant Stringham, who had come west in the first company with Brigham Young. He had never even had his picture taken.

I searched in the records of the Historian's Office, thinking there would perhaps at the time of his death be a few words about him in the old files of the *Deseret News*. Not a word. I looked up my five uncles still living, asking them when grandfather joined the Church, and something of his early life. They did not know. On a trip to Canada I found a cousin who had known him well, but he could give me no help.

I had done my best, but to no avail. Then one day my Uncle Phil, on his way from his winter temple work in St. George, stopped at Manti and visited some cousins living there. They gave him almost a dozen closely typewritten pages. It was a compilation of incidents and dates of the Stringham family from the time they lived on a farm in New York before joining the Church in 1832, until they came to the Salt Lake Valley. Julia Harmon Kesler had written this record from the information given her by grandfather's sister and brother, Elmeda Stringham Kesler and Jeremiah Stringham.

Here are a few pictures of the everyday life of 100 years ago taken from those pages:

The Stringham family is of English descent, early settlers of the New England States of America. George Stringham married Polly Hendrickson. Their children were Sabra, Briant, Jeremiah, Elmeda, George and Benjamin.

From our earliest recollection we lived on a farm near Jamestown, Chautauqua Co., New York. The country was heavily wooded; we had a four-roomed long house, one room of which was father's workshop. He was a cooper and made barrels, baskets, buckets, and measures of wood.

It took four years to clear the heavy timber from our four acre farm. And then the land was poor, impoverished by the heavy timber and underbrush. It raised poor wheat and corn, but produced good potatoes and other vegetables.

We used corn bread altogether, except when mother baked a short cake of wheat flour for breakfast on Sundays. We had sand on the floors instead of carpets. Each Saturday the floor was swept and scrubbed and clean white sand brought from the near creek and sprinkled quite deep over the board floor.

We had no stoves but cooked at the open fireplace over a wood fire. An oven was sometimes built at the side of the fireplace which was heated by filling it with live coals, removing the coals before the bread was put in to bake. Tin ovens placed in front of the fireplace were also used.

Our fruit was wild blackberries and wild crab apples. Our sugar was made from the maple trees in the forest. In the very early spring the boys gathered the sap from the trees and boiled it down to make sugar. We had that kind only.

The nurse who helped mother at my birth gave me a ewe lamb from which we raised a number of sheep. Father sheared the sheep and mother spun the wool and hired it woven into cloth from which our clothing was made, also the sheet blankets for our beds.

While here at Jamestown, mother and father joined the "Mormon" Church (about 1832). Many meetings were held at our house before a meetinghouse was built, and we often saw the Prophet Joseph Smith.

On account of the poor land and expense of clearing off the heavy timber, people were moving west to the prairie states of Indiana and Illinois. We left New York state in the winter of 1834, camping in barns and out-buildings along the way. We arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, where the saints were gathering that spring. We remained in Kirtland four years. The Kirtland Temple was finished in the winter time (1836), and Briant and Jerry with the other boys cut wood to keep the fires to dry the plaster, while Elmeda with other little children gathered bits of glass and broken dishes which were broken up quite fine and mixed with the mortar used in plastering the Temple.

On July 4th, 1838, we went with a company of 500 saints, journeying with horse teams to Springfield, Illinois. Jerry and Briant helped father cut shingles. The blocks of wood were steamed in large tanks. The blocks were then put under a large knife which was fitted into a frame and the knife pressed down by means of a lever to slice off the shingles

We remember as children of seeing a tall, quiet man standing at the shop door watching father cut shingles, and they said his name was Abraham Lincoln.

The older children attended school two winters while in Kirtland, Ohio. They had but one text-book, "Cobb's Elementary Spelling Book," from which was taught reading, writing, and spelling. Briant soon became a good penman and taught writing school in Sabra's house during the long winter evenings for 50 cents a term to those who could pay and free for those pupils too poor to pay. He was always generous and loved to help a friend.

Briant and Elmeda were pretty singers. This is one of the songs we sang during the campaign of President William Henry Harrison:

"Oh, where, tell me where, was your buckeye cabin made,
It was made among the merry boys, who wield the hoe and spade,
Where the log cabin stands, in the bonny buckeys shade."

In a campaign parade at Springfield for William Henry Harrison for President, Briant was seated on the limb of a buckeye tree beside a raccoon on a log cabin float drawn by 14 yoke of oxen.

In 1840 we moved to Nauvoo, Illinois. Mother was taken sick with chills and fever. We were living in a board shanty; winter was coming on and we suffered much from cold. Briant and Jerry went up the Mississippi River about 6 miles, cut logs, carried them to the river on their backs, where they made a raft and floated them down the river to the town of Nauvoo, and built us a house of two rooms. We only remained there during the winter and spring. Briant was baptized into the Church in Nauvoo, June, 1841, by William Riley.

The whole family being sick with malaria fever we returned to Springfield, Illinois, the following summer.

We moved to Nauvoo a second time in 1845. Father was again sick with the ague, so Briant had all he could do to support the family.

During the summer of 1846 the family consisting of father and mother,

Briant, George and Benjamin moved with the rest of the saints from Nauvoo to Winter Quarters, Nebraska, where they remained until the summer of 1848 (June 4th), when they journeyed across the plains and mountains, reaching Salt Lake Valley, September 24th, 1848.

Briant Stringham left Winter Quarters with the first pioneers, April 13th, 1847, and arrived in Salt Lake Valley, July 24th, 1847.

Through this record of the past, my grandfather ceased to be a name on my pedigree chart. He became an active, valiant youth who went through the crucible of the establishment of the Church and came out pure gold. To have met him, if only on the written page, has enriched my life.

Don't miss the thrill of being a prospector in the field of Treasures of Truth.—(*Improvement Era*, October, 1933.)

LIVERPOOL DISTRICT CONFERENCE

It was to Preston that the first Latter-day Saint missionaries came in 1837. It was under the Preston tram bridge that the first baptism into the Church, in England, took place in the same year. It was on April 1st, 1838, in Preston's "Cock Pit," that the first conference of the British Mission was held, at which time Joseph Fielding was sustained to succeed Heber C. Kimball as British Mission president. On Sunday, October 1st, 1933, Liverpool District held its Fall Conference in Preston's Prince's Theatre, scene of many bitter anti-"Mormon" pictures.

In a setting rich in historical colour, the theme of "Abundant Life" was expressed before an unusually large assembly. The programme of the morning session was presented by the children, who sang and recited. Then the Conference adjourned into Priesthood and Relief Society sessions which were conducted by President James H. Douglas and Rintha Pratt Douglas respectively. Here reports and instructions on the activities of the various branches were given.

The afternoon was turned over to an expression by the auxiliary organizations of the Church's facilities for the development of an "Abundant Life"—at home, at work, in play and in worship. Opportunities afforded by the Primary, M. I. A., Genealogy, Relief Society, and Priesthood departments to cultivate strength of character and depth of personality were outlined by local members.

Between the afternoon and evening sessions a tour of Church landmarks was conducted. Included were Vauxhall Chapel, the River Ribble, site of the old "Cock Pit," and the flag market from which many men prominent in Church history have spoken. In the evening Sister Douglas read a message from Sister Leah D. Widtsoe, her farewell greeting. Sister Donglas then paid a tribute to Retiring President and Sister Widtsoe and saluted Apostle Joseph F. Merrill and Sister Merrill as the new heads of European Mission work. She closed her remarks with a convincing testimony of the divinity of the work in which she was engaged.

Announcing the day as his sixty-fifth birthday, President Benjamin R. Birchall, President of the Irish Free State Dis-

trict, caught the attention of his audience when he began with, "If you'd leave me alone I'd like to cry a little, and then sing, 'Home, Sweet Home.'" He is a native of Lancashire, and amused and interested his countryfolk while speaking to them in their own dialect. His daughter, Ena, Irish Gold-medal soprano, sang, "Ye Who Are Called to Labour."

President James H. Douglas then greeted the Conference. He praised the characters of the missionaries, and outlined some of his own experiences as a travelling Elder. Reviewing the history of the Church in England, he remarked on its rapid growth among the truth-loving people of Britain. He sketched the lives of the three witnesses of the Book of Mormon and added his own testimony to the divinity of that work. Encouraging the saints to go forward in righteous living, President Douglas bore testimony to the truth and majesty of the great work brought about through Joseph Smith, and left his benediction on the people of Lancashire.

In his statistical report President Kent S. Bramwell stated that the District included nine branches with a total enrollment of 765. Since the last Conference in April, the four missionaries of the district had distributed 13,030 tracts during 1,205 hours of door-to-door tracting, in addition to 19 copies of the Book of Mormon, 490 pamphlets, and 17 other Church books. In addition, local people have done considerable missionary work.

The conference was directed by President James H. Douglas of the British Mission, and the auxiliary meetings by Sister Rintha Pratt Douglas, consulting supervisor of auxiliaries, and president of the Relief Societies of the British Mission. There were in attendance also President and Sister Benjamin R. Birchall and Sister Ena Birchall of the Free State District; President Kent S. Bramwell and Elders Gordon B. Hinckley, William R. Houston, and Harvey F. Freestone of the Liverpool District; President B. Fred Pulham of the Manchester District; President Wheeler R. English of the Birmingham District; Elders John D. Riggs and Drayton C. Nuttall of the Norwich District, and Elder Louis G. Robinson of the Hull District.

GORDON B. HINCKLEY, Clerk of Conference.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD

Transfers: On October 11th, Elder John Dell Riggs was transferred from the Norwich District to the British Mission Office; Elder Heber I. Boden, from the Newcastle to the Nottingham District; and Elder Douglas R. Clawson, from the Nottingham to the Newcastle District.

Doings in the Districts: *London*—Returning from the Boy Scout Jamboree in Hungary, Oscar A. Kirkham, General Secretary of the Y.M.M.I.A., was a London visitor late in August. In a special address to a gathering of London Saints, he spoke of his Jamboree experiences, of the importance of proper leadership for youth, and made an earnest appeal for enthusiastic acceptance of the M. I. A. programme for the coming year. Elder Kirkham also pledged the whole-hearted co-operation of the General M. I. A. Board in making the coming programmes adaptable to British Mission conditions.

Nottingham—Members and friends of the Mansfield, Derby, and

Leicester Branches conducted Harvest Festivals in their branch halls, all on October 2nd. Each affair was a distinct success.

Branch Conferences: *Nottingham District*—Leicester Branch, October 1st. Speakers pictured the blessings, both spiritually and materially, of Harvest and Thanksgiving. Attendance was unusually large at both sessions.

Eastwood Branch, September 24th. "Salvation for the Dead" was portrayed in recitation, song and sermon to those in attendance.

Birmingham District—Kidderminster Branch, September 17th. Conference was held in conjunction with the Harvest Festival, and the programme was ably presented by local members.

Handsworth Branch, September 24th. Local members and Elders discussed the "Visitations of the Prophet Joseph Smith."

London District—Gravesend Branch, September 10th. Branch members gave testimony and evidence of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

Letchworth Branch, September 17th. "'Mormonism,' a Complete Religion," was presented by local members, all of whom, in some capacity, participated in the services.

North London Branch, September 24th. President and Sister Joseph F. Merrill and Sister Leah D. Widtsoe were in attendance. Local members presented the programme planned around "The Economic Aspects of 'Mormonism.'"

South London Branch, October 1st. Local members presented, in song and speech, a well-planned programme. European Mission President Joseph F. Merrill and Sister Merrill were present.

Luton Branch, October 8th. "The Progress of the Gospel through the Ages" was reviewed by the local members and travelling Elders. Special musical numbers by the London District Elders' Quartette have been the feature of each Branch conference in the London District.

DEATHS

Cooper—Brother Joseph Cooper of the Hyde Branch, Manchester District, 87 years of age, died September 29th. Funeral services were held on October 3rd under the direction of Elder L. Gordon Park. Elder Park also dedicated the grave.

Bourke—Patrick Victor Bourke, aged fifteen years, son of Brother and Sister Thomas Bourke, died September 29th. Memorial services under the direction of President Benjamin R. Birchall were held in the Dublin chapel.

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